

Message Text

PAGE 01 SANTIA 04674 280008Z

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5912

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4674

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, CI

SUBJECT: PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: STATE 192805

1. I HAVE TALKED WITH FONMIN HUERTA ABOUT QUESTION RAISED REFTEL. FONMIN WOULD GREATLY PREFER THAT ANY REFERENCE TO OUR CONVERSATION LAST NIGHT BE PRIVATE OR IN EXECUTIVE SESSION. RELUCTANTLY AND AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, HE GAVE ME PERMISSION TO ADVISE THE DEPARTMENT THAT A MENTION COULD BE MADE OF OUR DISCUSSION AND HIS ASSURANCES TO ME IF THIS IS NECESSARY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEM WE FACE. HE SAID THE TENOR AND NATURE OF ANY PUBLIC REFERENCE TO OUR CONVERSATION WOULD OF COURSE MAKE A LOT OF DIFFERENCE.

2. COMMENT: I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGING IF THE DEPARTMENT WERE TO TICK OFF POINTS I MADE FROM PARAS 3 TO 5 IN STATE 190162. IF IT WERE POSSIBLE TO SAY THAT THE FONMIN, ON THE OCCASION OF OUR MEETING ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS (FYI WE ALSO DISCUSSED WHEAT), DESCRIBED THE MEASURES THAT THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT IS TAKING TO ENSURE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, RIGHTS OF REFUGEES IN COLLABORATION WITH UN HIGH COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE AND HUMANE TREATMENT FOR DETAINEES IN COLLABORATION WITH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, I THINK SUCH STATEMENT WOULD NOT CAUSE SERIOUS TROUBLE. DEPARTMENT MIGHT GO ON TO SAY THAT FONMIN HUERTA WENT ON TO EXPRESS THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE TO UPHOLD ALL ITS CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANTIA 04674 280008Z

OBLIGATIONS IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND TO NOTE HOW STRONGLY THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE FEELS THIS CONCERN. IN PRIVATE TALKS OR EXECUTIVE SESSION, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN MIGHT OF COURSE GO FURTHER.

3. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT TALKS ON THIS SUBJECT ARE NOT HELPFUL HERE. I BELIEVE THE PUBLIC LINKING BY THE BRITISH OF RECOGNITION AND THEIR DEMARCHE CREATED AN UNFORTUNATE LOCAL IMPRESSION. MOREOVER, I AM CONVINCED THAT WE WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILEANS AND FOREIGNERS IF WE CAN CONVINCE THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT OF OUR ABILITY TO TALK ABOUT THESE MATTERS IN PRIVATE AND NOT TO MAKE THE GOC THE OBJECT OF PUBLIC HUMILIATION AND EMBARRASSMENT. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF OUR WORK HERE, WE WOULD DO MUCH BETTER NOT TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT. HOWEVER, I AM AWARE THAT WE HAVE SERIOUS AND INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS AT HOME, AND YOU ARE THE BEST JUDGES WHERE TO DRAW THE LINE BETWEEN DAMAGE, COSTS AND NECESSITIES IN SANTIAGO AND WASHINGTON.

4. I HOPE THE DEPARTMENT'S LETTER OF COMMENT WILL SEEK TO HEAD OFF PROPOSED CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 308. SUCH AN EXPRESSION BY THE CONGRESS WOULD BE REGARDED HERE AS A DIRECT INTERVENTION.
DAVIS

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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